

**Tribal Water Quality Cooperative Agreements
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)
Clean Water Act 104(b)(3)**

Requests for Proposals

Fiscal Year 2004

Full Text Announcement

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

The purpose of this program is to assist federally-recognized Indian tribes, tribal consortia, and non-profit organizations (which support tribal programs) to implement requirements related to the NPDES Program. Examples of eligible activities include the development and implementation of control strategies for combined sewage overflow and storm water discharge problems, sludge programs, and community-based water pollution prevention activities. In addition, NPDES Water Quality Cooperative Agreements can be used to implement priority tribal environmental protection activities and conduct innovative watershed protection planning.

II. Award Information

EPA Region IX will allocated approximately \$300,000 to fund Tribal Water Quality Cooperative Agreements in Fiscal Year 2004. Project proposals should not exceed \$125,000 in federal funds (no matching funds are required). Costs incurred prior to grant award will not be reimbursed with grant funds. Tribal NPDES project proposals that were submitted last year and did not receive funding in Fiscal Year 2003 maybe revised consistent with the ranking factors and priority objectives and resubmitted for consideration.

III. Eligibility Information

Assistance will be targeted to applicants who have successfully demonstrated the ability to carry out Federal grant programs. Project proposals should describe specific environmental improvements to be achieved and should explain how specific activities will build Tribal capacity. No matching funds are required. However, applicants may provide a non-federal cash or in-kind match to indicate the Tribe's commitment to completing the project. Please note funds awarded through this program may not be used to support ongoing administrative costs, construction, research or other ineligible costs as outlined in 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31.

Examples of Eligible Activities:

- NPDES Permit Program Capacity Building
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)/Water Quality Assessments and Monitoring Programs
- Watershed Planning and Development of Comprehensive Ecosystem Restoration

- Programs (Education and Public Outreach);CWA/SDWA Program Integration
- Tribal Water Pollution Prevention Program Development (storm water Phase II compliance, wastewater treatment, and sewage sludge program activities)
- Management Systems for Water Pollution Control Programs, Asset Management (strategic best practices applications and approaches for water efficiency and water demand management, environmental management systems)
- Wastewater Infrastructure Security, Innovative Approaches to reduce risks at WWTPs (site security, wireless control systems, sanitary sewer collection systems)

IV. Proposal Submission Information

Proposals should be limited to 3 pages. Full application packages should not be submitted at this time. It is recommended that confidential information not be included in the proposals. Applicants should be sure to address the relevance of their project to the selection criteria outlined in Section V. Proposals should conform to the following outline:

1. Name of Project;
2. Point of contact: Individual and Organization Name, Address, Phone Number, Fax Number, E-mail Address;
3. Is this a continuation of a previously funded project? **If yes, please provide the number and status of the current grant or cooperative agreement;**
4. Estimated proposed budget. Budget should identify all federal and other sources of funding for the project including the applicant cost-share. Budgets should clearly identify categories for funding distribution (supplies, contractual, staff, etc.);
5. Project description: should include brief description of the project area as well as how project relates to regional priorities for water quality improvement;
6. Include time line, key project milestones, explanation of environmental goals and objectives and final product(s).

Please e-mail your proposals to vanegas.loretta@epa.gov or send **three** copies of the Project proposals to:

Loretta Vanegas
Program Coordinator
U.S. EPA Region IX (WTR-10)
San Francisco, CA 94105
vanegas.loretta@epa.gov

Project proposals must be POSTMARKED by March 1, 2004. Proposals received after the due date will not be reviewed or considered for funding under this program.

V. Initial Proposal Review and Ranking Criteria

Priority Objectives

The following priority project categories will receive the highest overall ranking, and the key objective of the Tribal NPDES Water Quality Cooperative Agreement Program is to demonstrate an integrated watershed management approach:

- NPDES Program Strategies to Implement Watershed-Based Efforts
- Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL)/Water Quality Assessments and Monitoring Programs
- Watershed Planning and Development of Comprehensive Ecosystem Restoration Programs (Education and Public Outreach)
- Tribal Water Pollution Prevention Program Development (storm water, wastewater, and sewage sludge program activities)

The NPDES Water Quality Cooperative Agreements will be awarded through a competitive process and proposals will be evaluated based on the following project selection criteria:

Selection Criteria:

- Existing Environmental Programs and Tribal Capacity
- Watershed Assessment Activities (305(b) Reporting)
- Potential Environmental Results
- Innovative Watershed Approaches
- Clarity of Work plan
- Community Involvement/Community Support
- Likelihood of Success

Final selection will be made by the Supervisor, Clean Water Act, Tribal Office. Selected Tribes will be notified and requested to submit a full application. It is expected that unsuccessful applicants will be notified by e-mail. Proposals will be evaluated by EPA staff on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low and 5 being high. The criteria above will have essentially equal weight.

VI. Award Administration

Proposals that are selected for continuance in the process will be sent an application kit for funding. These recipients will be invited to submit a detailed work plan and the completed application for funding. Receipt of an application kit is not a guarantee of funding. No funding will occur if deadlines are missed or prior to the EPA Project Officer approving the work plan.

Applicable Grant Regulations and Circulars: Tribal government entities will follow 40 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part 31. In addition, Tribal governments will follow 40 CFR Part 35, sub-part B. Tribal Governments will follow Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87. Nonprofit organizations will follow 40 CFR Part 30.

Reporting: Quarterly project status reports and a final Financial Status Report will be required. Quarterly reports should describe project activities and provide EPA with information about project development. The fourth quarter status report and self-evaluation should include a summary of project accomplishments and an assessment of the applicant's watershed priorities. The Financial Status Report must accurately account for all Federal funds expended and identify appropriate use of federal funds.

Quality Assurance Project Plans: Quality Assurance Project Plans must be approved by EPA Region 9 prior to the collection of environmental data. Be aware that additional time and resources may be required in order to gain Quality Assurance Project Plan approval. Plans may be completed during the project period. If the Quality Assurance Project Plan is to be completed during the project period, a task regarding the activity must be included in the work plan and a condition will be placed on the grant award.

Disputes: Any disputes will be resolved in accordance with 40 CFR 30.36 and Part 31, Subpart F.

Confidentiality: Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with Agency Regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Sub-part B.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

VII. Agency Contact

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